

Remarks

The various parts of the Office Action (and other matters, if any) are discussed below under appropriate headings.

Allowable Subject Matter

The allowance of claims 12, 13, and 17 is noted with appreciation. Similarly, the indication that claims 6 and 7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims is noted with appreciation. Claim 6 has been amended to independent form. Claim 7 depends from claim 6. Accordingly, claims 6 and 7 are now believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claims 1, 3-5, 8-11, and 14-16 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,297,157 to Van Vliet ("Van Vliet") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,716,478 to Booth et al. ("Booth") and/or U.S. Patent No. 3,629,039 to Frick ("Frick"). Withdrawal of the rejection is requested for at least the following reasons.

As amended, independent claims 1, 8, and 10 recite a method comprising, *inter alia*, a transferring step of transferring an elastic piece to a web in a flow direction of the web, wherein the steps are performed as part of a lateral flow process. A lateral flow process is described in the background of invention section of the application.

None of the references relied upon by the Examiner appear to disclose a lateral flow process. Accordingly, claims 1, 3-5, 8-11, and 14-16 are believed to be allowable, and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, request is made for timely issuance of a notice of allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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